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AMONG THE MEADOW PEOPLE

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AMONG THE MEADOW PEOPLE

BY

CLARA DILLINGHAM PIERSON

Illustrated by F. C. GORDON



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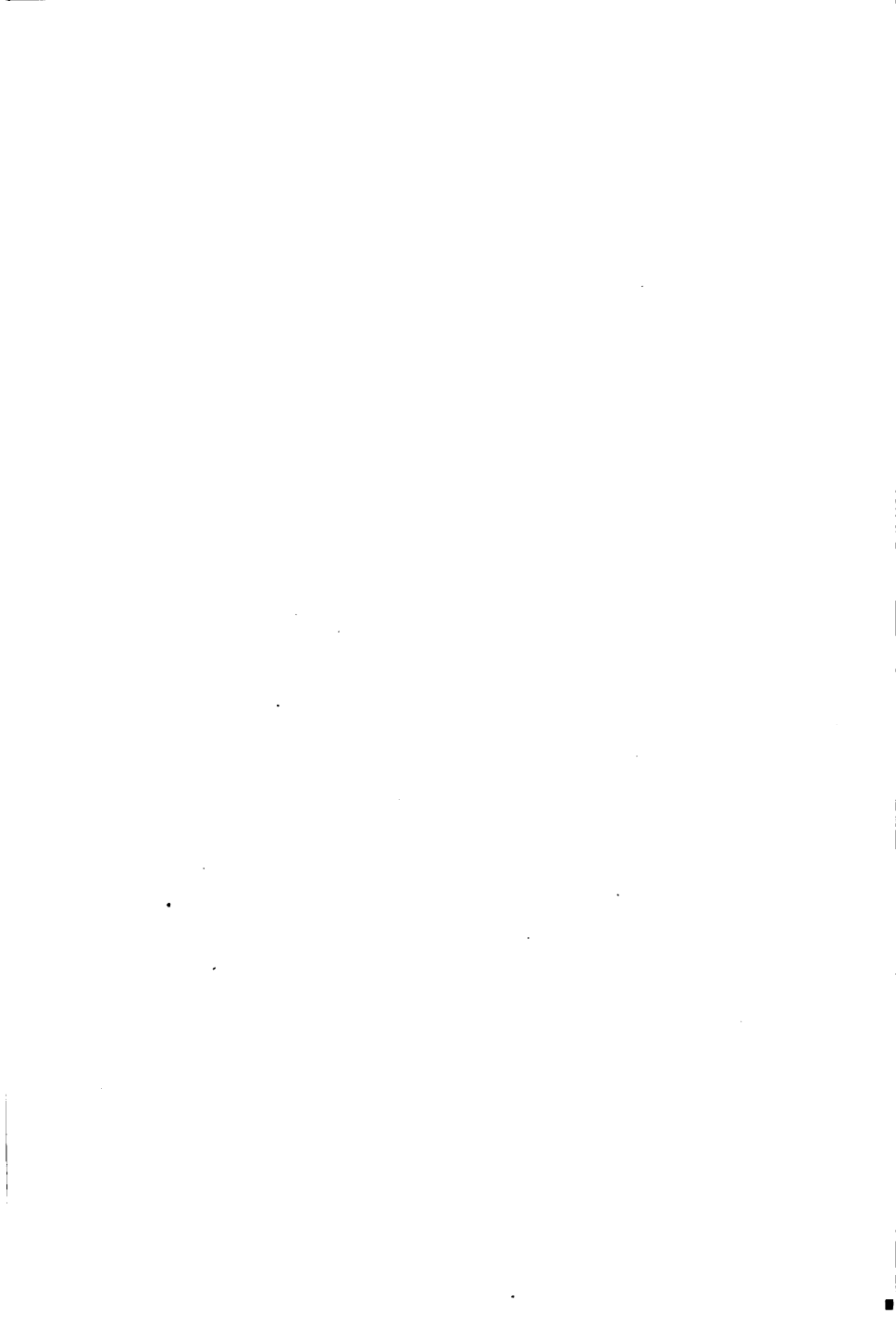
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TO WHOM
ADDRESS

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INTRODUCTION.

MANY of these stories of field life were written for the little ones of my kindergarten, and they gave so much pleasure, and aroused such a new interest in "the meadow people," that it has seemed wise to collect and add to the original number and send them out to a larger circle of boys and girls.

All mothers and teachers hear the cry for "just one more," and find that there are times when the bewitching tales of animals, fairies, and "really truly" children are all exhausted, and tired imagination will not supply another. In selecting the tiny creatures of field and garden for the characters in this book, I have remembered with pleasure the way in which my

TO MY ALBINO LAD

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Introduction.

loyal pupils befriended stray crickets and grasshoppers, their intense appreciation of the new realm of fancy and observation, and the eagerness and attention with which they sought Mother Nature, the most wonderful and tireless of all story-tellers.

CLARA DILLINGHAM PIERSON.

Stanton, Michigan,
April 8th, 1897.



THE BUTTERFLY THAT WENT CALLING

As the warm spring days came, Mr. Yellow Butterfly wriggled and pushed in his snug little brown house, and wished he could get out to see the world. He remembered the days when he was a fuzzy little caterpillar, crawling slowly over grass and leaves, and he remembered how beautiful the sky and the flowers all were. Then he thought of the new wings which had been growing from his back, and he



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tried to move them, just to see how it would feel. He had only six legs since his wings grew, and he missed all the sticky feet which he had to give up when he began to change into a butterfly.

The more he thought about it the more he squirmed, until suddenly he found something that looked like milk in his little home, and he saw that where this milky-looking stuff had made a little puddle at the lower end of his room the walls of his house were melting away. They got thinner and thinner, until he could see the beautiful sunlight shining outside. Then all the milky stuff leaked out, and there was a tiny hole ready for Mr. Butterfly to crawl through. The thin dark brown wrapper around him popped open, and out he went.

Poor Mr. Butterfly! He found his wings so wet and crinkled that they would n't work at all, so he had to sit quietly in the sunshine all day drying them. And just as they got big, and smooth, and dry, it

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grew dark, and Mr. Butterfly had to crawl under a leaf to sleep.

The next morning, bright and early, he flew away to visit the flowers. First he stopped to see the Daisies by the roadside. They were all dancing in the wind, and their bright faces looked as cheerful as anyone could wish. They were glad to see Mr. Butterfly, and wished him to stay all day with them. He said: "You are very kind, but I really could n't think of doing it. You must excuse my saying it, but I am surprised to think you will grow here. It is very dusty and dry, and then there is no shade. I am sure I could have chosen a better place."

The Daisies smiled and nodded to each other, saying, "This is the kind of place we were made for, that's all."

Mr. Butterfly shook his head very doubtfully, and then bade them a polite "Good-morning," and flew away to call on the Cardinals,

The Cardinals are a very stately family, as everybody knows. They hold their heads very high, and never make deep bows, even to the wind, but for all that they are a very pleasant family to meet. They gave Mr. Butterfly a dainty lunch of honey, and seemed much pleased when he told them how beautiful the river looked in the sunlight.

"It is a delightful place to grow," said they.

"Ye-es," said Mr. Butterfly, "it is very pretty, still I do not think it can be healthful. I really cannot understand why you flowers choose such strange homes. Now, there are the Daisies, where I just called. They are in a dusty, dry place, where there is no shade at all. I spoke to them about it, and they acted quite uppish."

"But the Daisies always do choose such places," said the Cardinals.

"And your family," said Mr. Butterfly, "have lived so long in wet places that it

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is a wonder you are alive. Your color is good, but to stand with one's roots in water all the time! It is shocking."

"Cardinals and Butterflies live differently," said the flowers. "Good-morning."

Mr. Butterfly left the river and flew over to the woods. He was very much out of patience. He was so angry that his feelers quivered, and now you know how angry he must have been. He knew that the Violets were a very agreeable family, who never put on airs, so he went at once to them.

He had barely said "Good-morning" to them when he began to explain what had displeased him.

"To think," he said, "what notions some flowers have! Now, you have a pleasant home here in the edge of the woods. I have been telling the Daisies and the Cardinals that they should grow in such a place, but they would n't listen to me.

The Daisies were quite uppish about it, and the Cardinals were very stiff."

"My dear friend," answered a Violet, "they could never live if they moved up into our neighborhood. Every flower has his own place in this world, and is happiest in that place. Everything has its own place and its own work, and every flower that is wise will stay in the place for which it was intended. You were exceedingly kind to want to help the flowers, but suppose they had been telling you what to do. Suppose the Cardinals had told you that flying around was not good for your health, and that to be truly well you ought to grow planted with your legs in the mud and water."

"Oh!" said Mr. Butterfly, "Oh! I never thought of that. Perhaps Butterflies don't know everything."

"No," said the Violet, "they don't know everything, and you have n't been out of your chrysalis very long. But those who

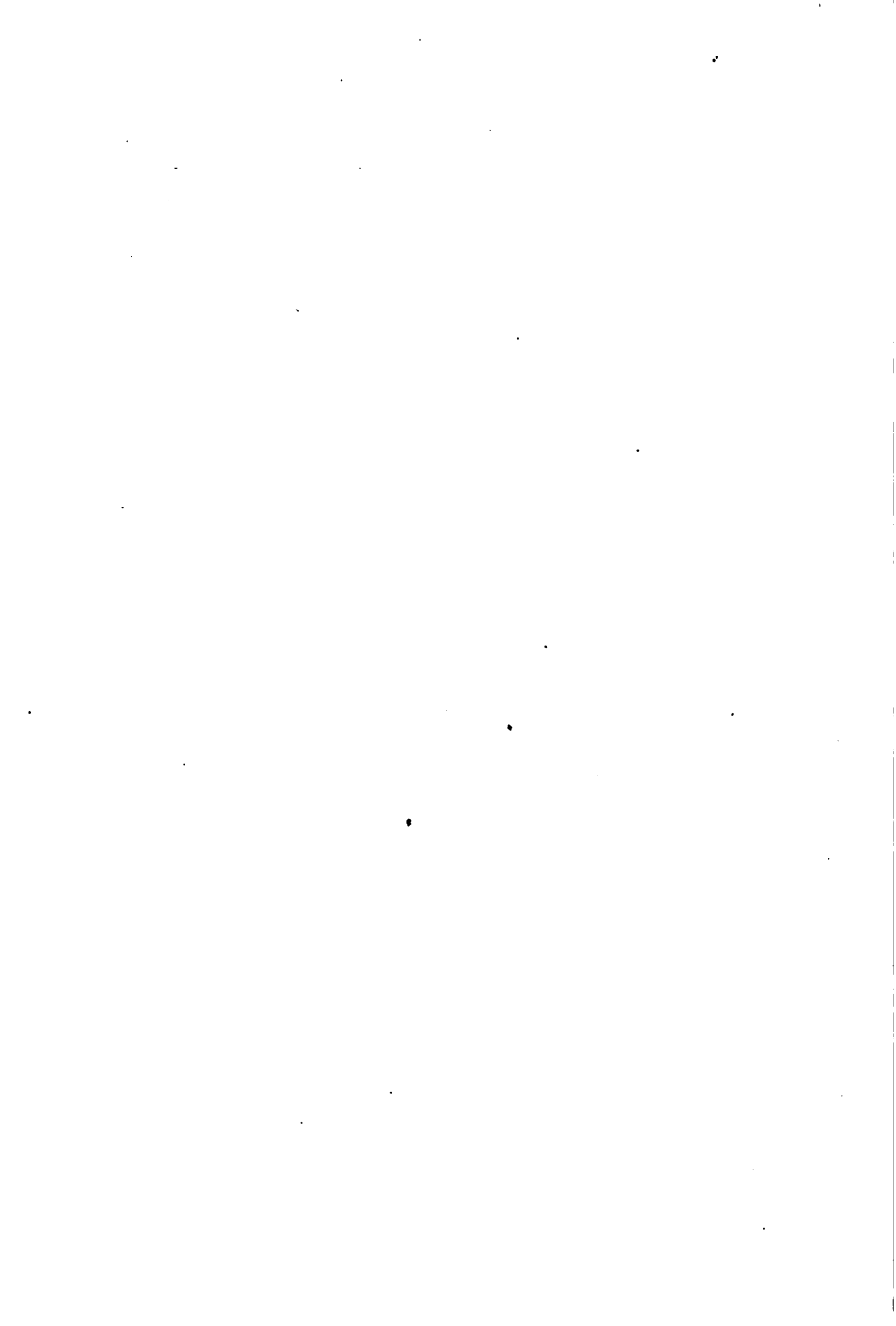
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are ready to learn can always find someone to tell them. Won't you eat some honey?"

And Mr. Butterfly sipped honey and was happy.

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IN the lower part of the meadow, where the grass grew tall and tender, there lived a fine and sturdy young Snail ; that is to say, a fine-looking Snail. His shell was a beautiful soft gray, and its curves were regular and perfect. His body was soft and moist, and just what a Snail's body should be. Of course, when it came to travelling, he could not go fast, for none of his family are rapid travellers, still, if he had been plucky and patient,

he might have seen much of the meadow, and perhaps some of the world outside. His friends and neighbors often told him that he ought to start out on a little journey to see the sights, but he would always answer, "Oh, it is too hard work!"

There was nobody who liked stories of meadow life better than this same Snail, and he would often stop some friendly Cricket or Snake to ask for the news. After they had told him, they would say, "Why, don't you ever get out to see these things for yourself?" and he would give a little sigh and answer, "It is too far to go."

"But you need n't go the whole distance in one day," his visitor would say, "only a little at a time."

"Yes, and then I would have to keep starting on again every little while," the Snail would reply. "What of that?" said the visitor; "you would have plenty of resting spells, when you could lie in the shade of a tall weed and enjoy yourself."

"Well, what is the use?" the Snail would say. "I can't enjoy resting if I know I've got to go to work again," and he would sigh once more.

So there he lived, eating and sleeping, and wishing he could see the world, and meet the people in the upper part of the meadow, but just so lazy that he would n't start out to find them.

He never thought that the Butterflies and Beetles might not like it to have him keep calling them to him and making them tell him the news. Oh, no indeed! If he wanted them to do anything for him, he asked them quickly enough, and they, being happy, good-natured people, would always do as he asked them to.

There came a day, though, when he asked too much. The Grasshoppers had been telling him about some very delicious new plants that grew a little distance away, and the Snail wanted some very badly. "Can't you bring me some?" he

said. "There are so many of you, and you have such good, strong legs. I should think you might each bring me a small piece in your mouths, and then I should have a fine dinner of it."

The Grasshoppers did n't say anything then, but when they were so far away that he could not hear them, they said to each other, "If the Snail wants the food so much, he might better go for it. We have other things to do," and they hopped off on their own business.

The Snail sat there, and wondered and wondered that they did not come. He kept thinking how he would like some of the new food for dinner, but there it ended. He did n't want it enough to get it for himself.

The Grasshoppers told all their friends about the Snail's request, and everybody thought, "Such a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow deserves to be left quite alone." So it happened that for a very long time nobody went near the Snail.

The weather grew hotter and hotter. The clouds, which blew across the sky, kept their rain until they were well past the meadow, and so it happened that the river grew shallower and shallower, and the sunshine dried the tiny pools and rivulets which kept the lower meadow damp. The grass began to turn brown and dry, and, all in all, it was trying weather for Snails.

One day, a Butterfly called some of her friends together, and told them that she had seen the Snail lying in his old place, looking thin and hungry. "The grass is all dried around him," she said; "I believe he is starving, and too lazy to go nearer the river, where there is still good food for him."

They all talked it over together, and some of them said it was of no use to help a Snail who was too lazy to do anything for himself. Others said, "Well, he is too weak to help himself now, at all events,

and we might help him this once." And that is exactly what they did. The Butterflies and the Mosquitoes flew ahead to find the best place to put the Snail, and all the Grasshoppers, and Beetles, and other strong crawling creatures took turns in rolling the Snail down toward the river.

They left him where the green things were fresh and tender, and he grew strong and plump once more. It is even said that he was not so lazy afterward, but one cannot tell whether to believe it or not, for everybody knows that when people let themselves grow up lazy, as he did, it is almost impossible for them to get over it when they want to. One thing is sure: the meadow people who helped him were happier and better for doing a kind thing, no matter what became of the Snail.



IN one of the Ant-hills in the highest part of the meadow, were a lot of young Ants talking together. "I," said one, "am going to be a soldier, and drive away anybody who comes to make us trouble. I try biting hard things every day to make my jaws strong, so that I can guard the home better."

"I," said another and smaller Ant, "want to be a worker. I want to help build and repair the home. I want to get the food for the family, and feed



the Ant babies, and clean them off when they crawl out of their old coats. If I can do those things well, I shall be the happiest, busiest Ant in the meadow."

"We don't want to live that kind of life," said a couple of larger Ants with wings. "We don't mean to stay around the Ant-hill all the time and work. We want to use our wings, and then you may be very sure that you won't see us around home any more."

The little worker spoke up: "Home is a pleasant place. You may be very glad to come back to it some day." But the Ants with the wings turned their backs and would n't listen to another word.

A few days after this there were exciting times in the Ant-hill. All the winged Ants said "Good-bye" to the soldiers and workers, and flew off through the air, flew so far that the little ones at home could no longer see them. All day long they were gone, but the next morning when

the little worker (whom we heard talking) went out to get breakfast, she found the poor winged Ants lying on the ground near their home. Some of them were dead, and the rest were looking for food.

The worker Ant ran up to the one who had said she didn't want to stay around home, and asked her to come back to the Ant-hill. "No, I thank you," she answered. "I have had my breakfast now, and am going to fly off again." She raised her wings to go, but after she had given one flutter, they dropped off, and she could never fly again.

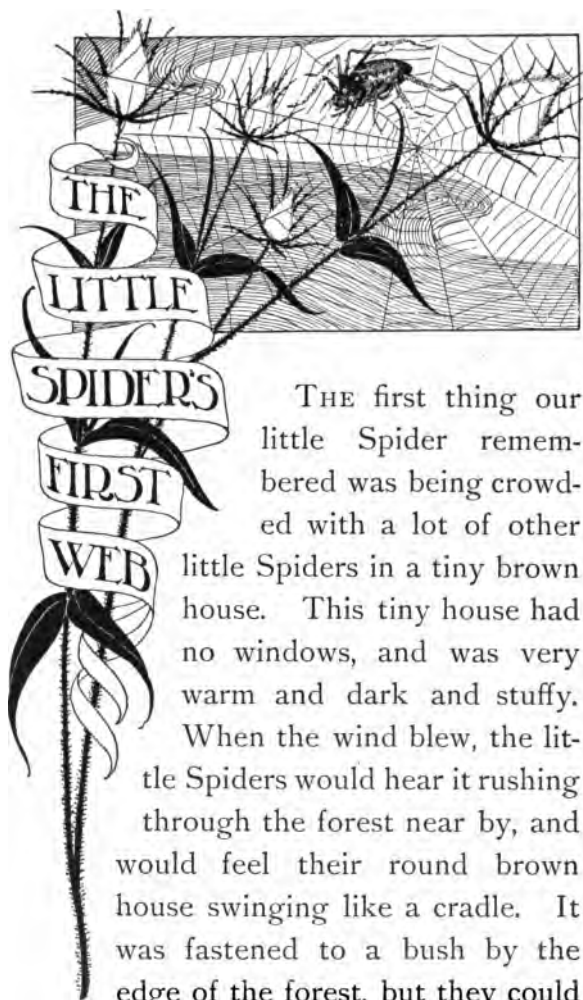
The worker hurried back to the Ant-hill to call some of her sister workers, and some of the soldiers, and they took the Ant who had lost her wings and carried her to another part of the meadow. There they went to work to build a new home and make her their queen.

First, they looked for a good, sandy place, on which the sun would shine all

day. Then the worker Ants began to dig in the ground and bring out tiny round pieces of earth in their mouths. The soldiers helped them, and before night they had a cosy little home in the earth, with several rooms, and some food already stored. They took their queen in, and brought her food to eat, and waited on her, and she was happy and contented.

By and by the Ant eggs began to hatch, and the workers had all they could do to take care of their queen and her little Ant babies, and the soldier Ants had to help. The Ant babies were little worms or grubs when they first came out of the eggs; after a while they curled up in tiny, tiny cases, called pupa-cases, and after another while they came out of these, and then they looked like the older Ants, with their six legs, and their slender little waists. But whatever they were, whether eggs, or grubs, or curled up in the pupa-cases, or lively little Ants, the workers fed

and' took care of them, and the soldiers fought for them, and the queen-mother loved them, and they all lived happily together until the young Ants were ready to go out into the great world and learn the lessons of life for themselves.



THE first thing our little Spider remembered was being crowded with a lot of other little Spiders in a tiny brown house. This tiny house had no windows, and was very warm and dark and stuffy. When the wind blew, the little Spiders would hear it rushing through the forest near by, and would feel their round brown house swinging like a cradle. It was fastened to a bush by the edge of the forest, but they could not know that, so they just wiggled and

pushed and ate the food that they found in the house, and wondered what it all meant. They did n't even guess that a mother Spider had made the brown house and put the food in it for her Spider babies to eat when they came out of their eggs. She had put the eggs in, too, but the little Spiders did n't remember the time when they lay curled up in the eggs. They did n't know what had been nor what was to be—they thought that to eat and wiggle and sleep was all of life. You see they had much to learn.

One morning the little Spiders found that the food was all gone, and they pushed and scrambled harder than ever, because they were hungry and wanted more. Exactly what happened nobody knew, but suddenly it grew light, and some of them fell out of the house. All the rest scrambled after, and there they stood, winking and blinking in the bright sunshine, and feeling a little bit dizzy, be-

cause they were on a shaky web made of silvery ropes.

Just then the web began to shake even more, and a beautiful great mother Spider ran out on it. She was dressed in black and yellow velvet, and her eight eyes glistened and gleamed in the sunlight. They had never dreamed of such a wonderful creature.

"Well, my children," she exclaimed, "I know you must be hungry, and I have breakfast all ready for you." So they began eating at once, and the mother Spider told them many things about the meadow and the forest, and said they must amuse themselves while she worked to get food for them. There was no father Spider to help her, and, as she said, "Growing children must have plenty of good plain food."

You can just fancy what a good time the baby Spiders had. There were a hundred and seventy of them, so they

The Little Spider's First Web. 29

had no chance to grow lonely, even when their mother was away. They lived in this way for quite a while, and grew bigger and stronger every day. One morning the mother Spider said to her biggest daughter, "You are quite old enough to work now, and I will teach you to spin your web."

The little Spider soon learned to draw out the silvery ropes from the pocket in her body where they were made and kept, and very soon she had one fastened at both ends to branches of the bush. Then her mother made her walk out to the middle of her rope bridge, and spin and fasten two more, so that it looked like a shining cross. After that was done, the mother showed her something like a comb, which is part of a Spider's foot, and taught her how to measure, and put more ropes out from the middle of the cross, until it looked like the spokes of a wheel.

The little Spider got much discouraged,

and said, "Let me finish it some other time ; I am tired of working now."

The mother Spider answered, "No, I cannot have a lazy child."

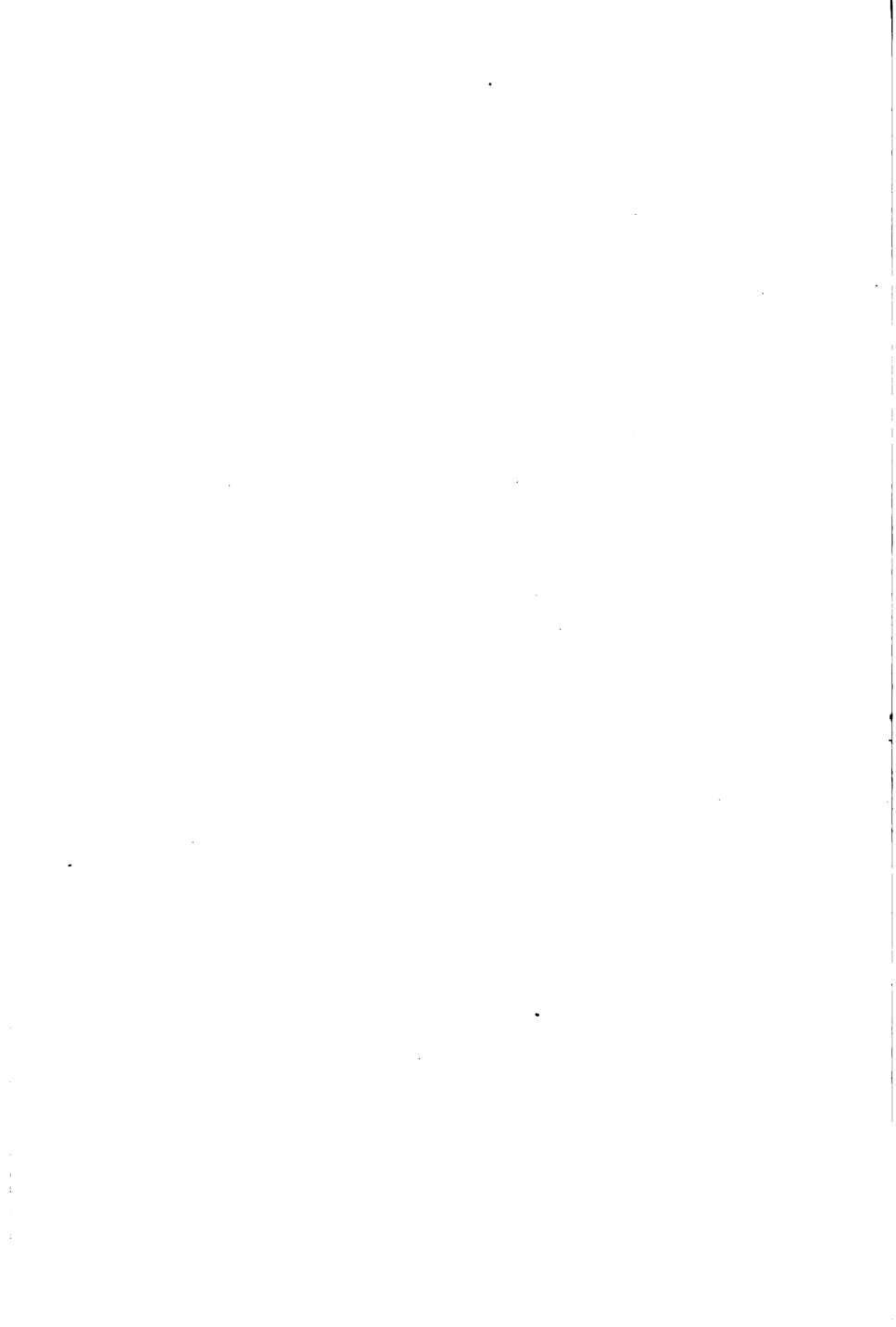
The little one said, "I can't ever do it, I know I can't."

"Now," said the mother, "I shall have to give you a Spider scolding. You have acted as lazy as the Tree Frog says boys and girls sometimes do. He has been up near the farm-house, and says that he has seen there children who do not like to work. The meadow people could hardly believe such a thing at first. He says they were cross and unhappy children, and no wonder ! Lazy people are never happy. You try to finish the web, and see if I am not right. You are not a baby now, and you must work and get your own food."

So the little Spider spun the circles of rope in the web, and made these ropes sticky, as all careful spiders do. She ate the loose ends and pieces that were left

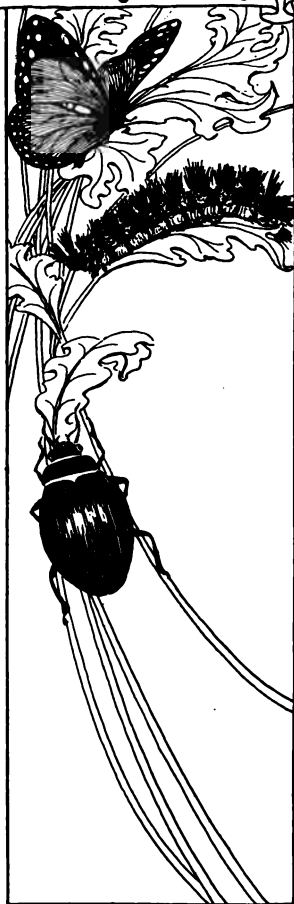
The Little Spider's First Web. 31

over, to save them for another time, and when it was done, it was so fine and perfect that her brothers and sisters crowded around, saying, "Oh! oh! oh! how beautiful!" and asked the mother to teach them. The little web-spinner was happier than she had ever been before, and the mother began to teach her other children. But it takes a long time to teach a hundred and seventy children.



THE BEETLE WHO DID NOT LIKE CATERPILLARS

ONE morning early in June, a fat and shining May Beetle lay on his back among the grasses, kicking his six legs in the air, and wriggling around while he tried to catch hold of a grass-blade by which to pull himself up. Now, Beetles do not like to lie on their backs in the sunshine, and this one was hot and tired from his long struggle. Beside that, he was very cross because he was late in getting his breakfast, so when he



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did at last get right side up, and saw a brown and black Caterpillar watching him, he grew very ill-mannered, and said some things of which he should have been ashamed.

"Oh, yes," he said, "you are quick enough to laugh when you think somebody else is in a fix. I often lie on my back and kick, just for fun." (Which was not true, but when Beetles are cross they are not always truthful.)

"Excuse me," said the Caterpillar, "I did not mean to hurt your feelings. If I smiled, it was because I remembered being in the same plight myself yesterday, and what a time I had smoothing my fur afterwards. Now, you won't have to smooth your fur, will you?" she asked pleasantly.

"No, I 'm thankful to say I have n't any fur to smooth," snapped the Beetle. "I am not one of the crawling, furry kind. My family wear dark brown, glossy coats,

and we always look trim and clean. When we want to hurry, we fly; and when tired of flying, we walk or run. We have two kinds of wings. We have a pair of dainty, soft ones, that carry us through the air, and then we have a pair of stiff ones to cover over the soft wings when we come down to the earth again. We are the finest family in the meadow."

"I have often heard of you," said the Caterpillar, "and am very glad to become acquainted."

"Well," answered the Beetle, "I am willing to speak to you, of course, but we can never be at all friendly. A May Beetle, indeed, in company with a Caterpillar! I choose my friends among the Moths, Butterflies, and Dragon-flies,—in fact, *I* move in the upper circles."

"Upper circles, indeed!" said a croaking voice beside him, which made the Beetle jump, "I have hopped over your head for two or three years, when you

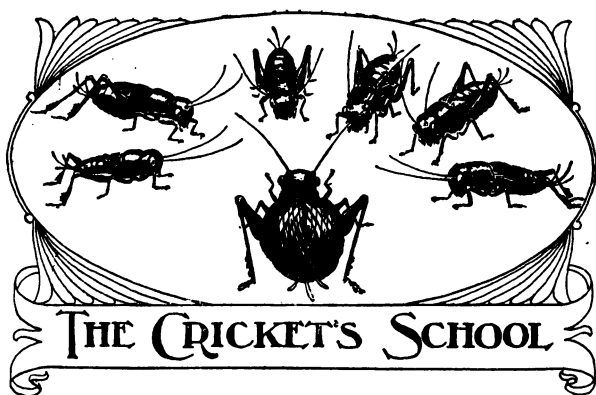
were nothing but a fat, white worm. *You'd* better not put on airs. The fine family of May Beetles were all worms once, and they had to live in the earth and eat roots, while the Caterpillars were in the sunshine over their heads, dining on tender green leaves and flower buds."

The May Beetle began to look very uncomfortable, and squirmed as though he wanted to get away, but the Tree Frog, for it was the Tree Frog, went on: "As for your not liking Caterpillars, they don't stay Caterpillars. Your new acquaintance up there will come out with wings one of these days, and you will be glad enough to know him." And the Tree Frog hopped away.

The May Beetle scraped his head with his right front leg, and then said to the Caterpillar, who was nibbling away at the milkweed: "You know, I was n't really in earnest about our not being friends. I

shall be very glad to know you, and all your family."

"Thank you," answered the Caterpillar, "thank you very much, but I have been thinking it over myself, and I feel that I really could not be friendly with a May Beetle. Of course, I don't mind speaking to you once in a while, when I am eating, and getting ready to spin my cocoon. After that it will be different. You see, then I shall belong to one of the finest families in the meadow, the Milkweed Butterflies. *We* shall eat nothing but honey, and dress in soft orange and black velvet. *We* shall not blunder and bump around when we fly. *We* shall enjoy visiting with the Dragon-flies and Moths. I shall not forget you altogether, I dare say, but I shall feel it my duty to move in the upper circles, where I belong. Good-morning."



IN one corner of the meadow lived a fat old Cricket, who thought a great deal of himself. He had such a big, shining body, and a way of chirping so very loudly, that nobody could ever forget where he lived. He was a very good sort of Cricket, too, ready to say the most pleasant things to everybody, yet, sad to relate, he had a dreadful habit of boasting. He had not always lived in the meadow, and he liked to tell of the wonderful things he had seen and done when he was younger and lived up near the white farm-house.

When he told these stories of what he had done, the big Crickets around him

would not say much, but just sit and look at each other. The little Crickets, however, loved to hear him talk, and would often come to the door of his house (which was a hole in the ground), to beg him to tell them more.

One evening he said he would teach them a few things that all little Crickets should know. He had them stand in a row, and then began: "With what part of your body do you eat?"

"With our mouths," all the little Crickets shouted.

"With what part of your body do you run and leap?"

"Our legs," they cried.

"Do you do anything else with your legs?"

"We clean ourselves with them," said one.

"We use them and our mouths to make our houses in the ground," said another.

“Oh yes, and we hear with our two front legs,” cried one bright little fellow.

“That is right,” answered the fat old Cricket. “Some creatures hear with things called ears, that grow on the sides of their heads, but for my part, I think it much nicer to hear with one’s legs, as we do.”

“Why, how funny it must be not to hear with one’s legs, as we do,” cried all the little Crickets together.

“There are a great many queer things to be seen in the great world,” said their teacher. “I have seen some terribly big creatures with only two legs and no wings whatever.”

“How dreadful!” all the little Crickets cried. “We would n’t think they could move about at all.”

“It must be very hard to do so,” said their teacher; “I was very sorry for them,” and he spread out his own wings and stretched his six legs to show how he enjoyed them.

"But how can they sing if they have no wings?" asked the bright little Cricket.

"They sing through their mouths, in much the same way that the birds have to. I am sure it must be much easier to sing by rubbing one's wings together, as we do," said the fat old teacher. "I could tell you many queer things about these two-legged creatures, and the houses in which they live, and perhaps some day I will. There are other large four-legged creatures around their homes that are very terrible, but, my children, I was never afraid of any of them. I am one of the truly brave people who are never frightened, no matter how terrible the sight. I hope, children, that you will always be brave, like me. If anything should scare you, do not jump or run away. Stay right where you are, and——"

But the little Crickets never heard the rest of what their teacher began to say, for at that minute Brown Bess, the Cow, came

through a broken fence toward the spot where the Crickets were. The teacher gave one shrill "chirp," and scrambled down his hole. The little Crickets fairly tumbled over each other in their hurry to get away, and the fat old Cricket, who had been out in the great world, never again talked to them about being brave.

THE CONTENTED EARTHWORMS

AFTER a long and soaking rain, the Earthworms came out of their burrows, or rather, they came part way out, for each Earthworm put out half of his body, and, as there were many of them and they lived near to each other, they could easily visit without leaving their own homes. Two of these long, slimy people were talking, when a Potato Bug strolled by. "You poor things," said he, "what a wretched life you must lead. Spending one's days in the dark earth must be very dreary."



“Dreary!” exclaimed one of the Earth-worms, “it is delightful. The earth is a snug and soft home. It is warm in cold weather and cool in warm weather. There are no winds to trouble us, and no sun to scorch us.”

“But,” said the Potato Bug, “it must be very dull. Now, out in the grass, one finds beautiful flowers, and so many families of friends.”

“And down here,” answered the Worm, “we have the roots. Some are brown and woody, like those of the trees, and some are white and slender and soft. They creep and twine, until it is like passing through a forest to go among them. And then, there are the seeds. Such busy times as there are in the ground in spring-time! Each tiny seed awakens and begins to grow. Its roots must strike downward, and its stalk upward toward the light. Sometimes the seeds are buried in the earth with the root end up, and then they

have a great time getting twisted around and ready to grow."

"Still, after the plants are all growing and have their heads in the air, you must miss them."

"We have the roots always," said the Worm. "And then, when the summer is over, the plants have done their work, helping to make the world beautiful and raise their seed babies, and they wither and droop to the earth again, and little by little the sun and the frost and the rain help them to melt back into the earth. The earth is the beginning and the end of plants."

"Do you ever meet the meadow people in it?" asked the Potato Bug.

"Many of them live here as babies," said the Worm. "The May Beetles, the Grasshoppers, the great Humming-bird Moths, and many others spend their babyhood here, all wrapped in eggs or cocoons. Then, when they are strong enough, and

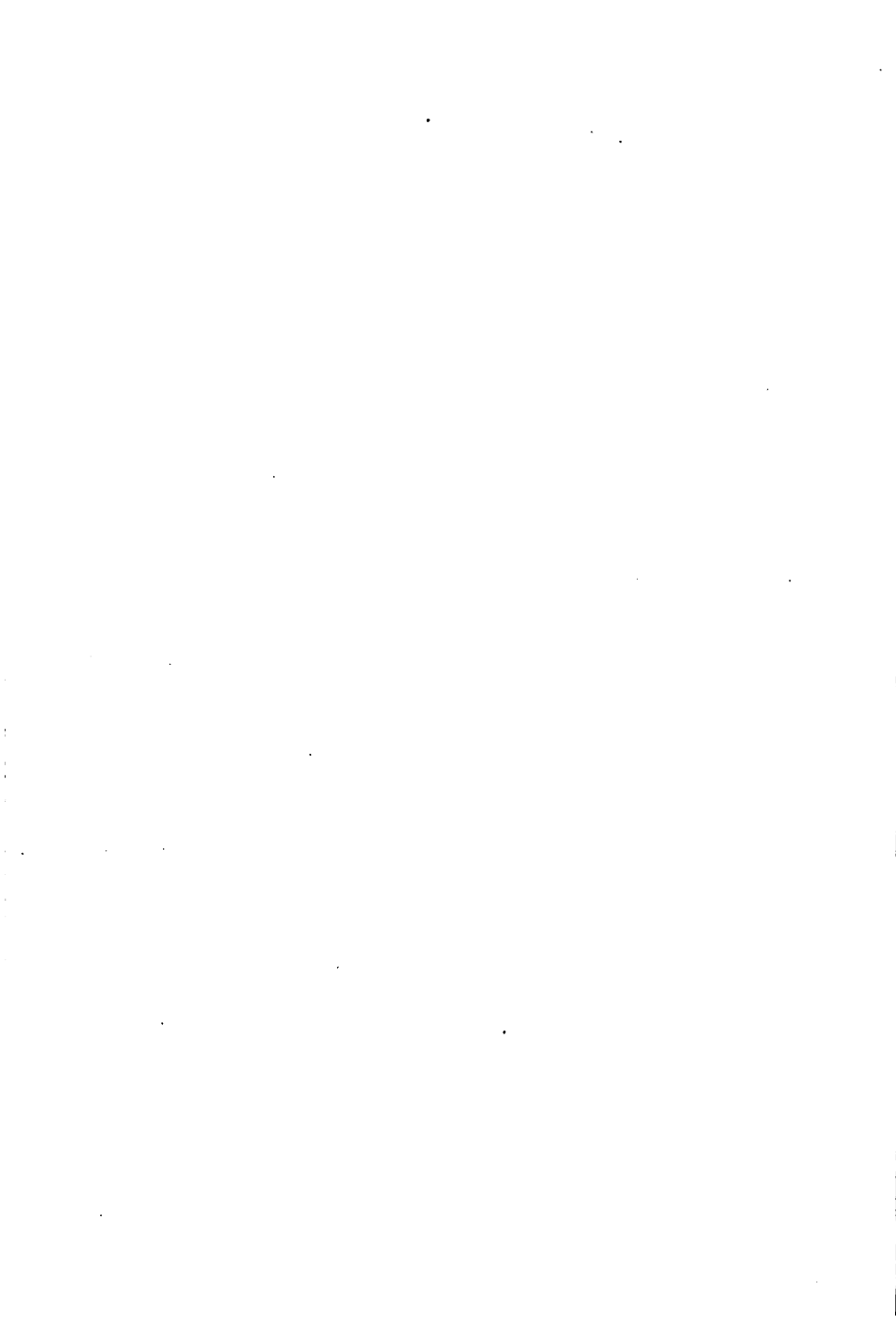
their legs and wings are grown, they push their way out and begin their work. It is their getting-ready time, down here in the dark. And then, there are the stones, and they are so old and queer. I am often glad that I am not a stone, for to have to lie still must be hard to bear. Yet I have heard that they did not always lie so, and that some of the very pebbles around us tossed and rolled and ground for years in the bed of a river, and that some of them were rubbed and broken off of great rocks. Perhaps they are glad now to just lie and rest."

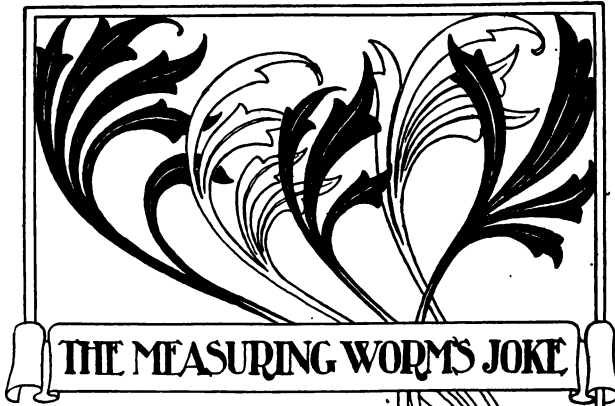
"Truly," said the Potato Bug, "you have a pleasant home, but give me the sunshine and fresh air, my six legs, and my striped wings, and you are welcome to it all."

"You are welcome to them all," answered the Worms, "We are contented with smooth and shining bodies, with which we can bore and wriggle our way

through the soft, brown earth. We like our task of keeping the earth right for the plants, and we will work and rest happily here."

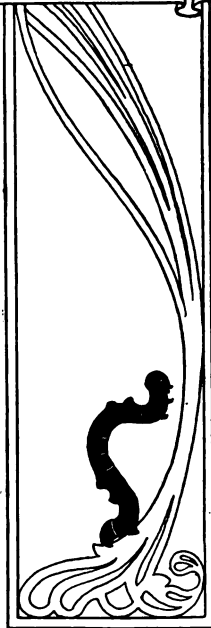
The Potato Bug went his way, and said to his brothers, "What do you think? I have been talking with Earthworms who would not be Potato Bugs if they could." And they all shook their heads in wonder, for they thought that to be Potato Bugs was the grandest and happiest thing in the world.





THE MEASURING WORM'S JOKE

ONE day there crawled over the meadow fence a jolly young Measuring Worm. He came from a bush by the roadside, and although he was still a young Worm he had kept his eyes open and had a very good idea how things go in this world. "Now," thought he, as he rested on the top rail of the fence, "I shall meet some new friends. I do hope they will be



pleasant. I will look about me and see if anyone is in sight." So he raised his head high in the air and, sure enough, there were seven Caterpillars of different kinds on a tall clump of weeds near by.

The Measuring Worm hurried over to where they were, and making his best bow said: "I have just come from the roadside and think I shall live in the meadow. May I feed with you?"

The Caterpillars were all glad to have him, and he joined their party. He asked many questions about the meadow, and the people who lived there, and the best place to find food. The Caterpillars said, "Oh, the meadow is a good place, and the people are nice enough, but they are not at all fashionable—not at all."

"Why," said the Measuring Worm, "if you have nice people and a pleasant place in which to live, I don't see what more you need."

"That is all very well," said a black and

yellow Caterpillar, "but what we want is fashionable society. The meadow people always do things in the same way, and one gets so tired of that. Now can you not tell us something different, something that Worms do in the great world from which you come?"

Just at this minute the Measuring Worm had a funny idea, and he wondered if the Caterpillars would be foolish enough to copy him. He thought it would be a good joke if they did, so he said very soberly, "I notice that when you walk you keep your body quite close to the ground. I have seen many Worms do the same thing, and it is all right if they wish to, but none of my family ever do so. Did you notice how I walk?"

"Yes, yes," cried the Caterpillars, "show us again."

So the Measuring Worm walked back and forth for them, arching his body as high as he could, and stopping every little

while to raise his head and look haughtily around.

“What grace!” exclaimed the Caterpillars. “What grace, and what style!” and one black and brown one tried to walk in the same way.

The Measuring Worm wanted to laugh to see how awkward the black and brown Caterpillar was, but he did not even smile, and soon every one of the Caterpillars was trying the same thing, and saying “Look at me. Don’t I do well?” or, “How was that?”

You can just imagine how those seven Caterpillars looked when trying to walk like the Measuring Worm. Every few minutes one of them would tumble over, and they all got warm and tired. At last they thought they had learned it very well, and took a long rest, in which they planned to take a long walk and show the other meadow people the fashion they had received from the outside world.

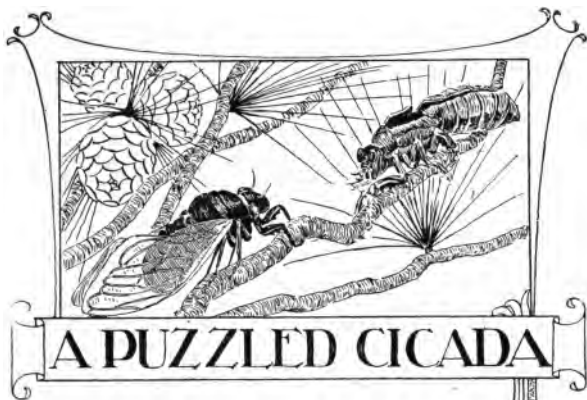
"We will walk in a line," they said, "as far as we can, and let them all see us. Ah, it will be a great day for the meadow when we begin to set the fashions!"

The mischievous young Measuring Worm said not a word, and off they started. The big black and yellow Caterpillar went first, the black and brown one next, and so on down to the smallest one at the end of the line, all arching their bodies as high as they could. All the meadow people stared at them, calling each other to come and look, and whenever the Caterpillars reached a place where there were many watching them, they would all raise their heads and look around exactly as the Measuring Worm had done. When they got back to their clump of bushes, they had the most dreadful backaches, but they said to each other, "Well, we have been fashionable for once."

And, at the same time, out in the grass, the meadow people were saying,

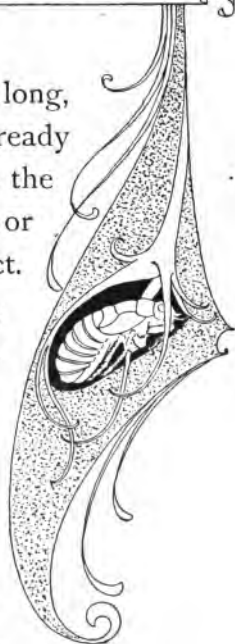
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“Did you ever see anything so ridiculous in your life?” All of which goes to show how very silly people sometimes are when they think too much of being fashionable.



A PUZZLED CICADA

SEVENTEEN years' is a long, long time to be getting ready to fly ; yet that is what the Seventeen-year Locusts, or Cicadas, have to expect. First, they lie for a long time in eggs, down in the earth. Then, when they awaken, and crawl out of their shells, they must grow strong enough to dig before they can make their way out to where the



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beautiful green grass is growing and waving in the wind.

The Cicada who got so very much puzzled had not been long out of his home in the warm, brown earth. He was the only Cicada anywhere around, and it was very lonely for him. However, he did not mind that so much when he was eating, or singing, or resting in the sunshine, and as he was either eating, or singing, or resting in the sunshine most of the time, he got along fairly well.

Because he was young and healthy he grew fast. He grew so very fast that after a while he began to feel heavy and stiff, and more like sitting still than like crawling around. Beside all this, his skin got tight, and you can imagine how uncomfortable it must be to have one's skin too tight. He was sitting on the branch of a bush one day, thinking about the wonderful great world, when—pop!—his skin had cracked open right down the

middle of his back! The poor Cicada was badly frightened at first, but then it seemed so good and roomy that he took a deep breath, and—pop!—the crack was longer still!

The Cicada found that he had another whole skin under the outside one which had cracked, so he thought, "How much cooler and more comfortable I shall be if I crawl out of this broken covering," and out he crawled.

It was n't very easy work, because he did n't have anybody to help him. He had to hook the claws of his outer skin into the bark of the branch, hook them in so hard that they could n't pull out, and then he began to wriggle out of the back of his own skin. It was exceedingly hard work, and the hardest of all was the pulling his legs out of their cases. He was so tired when he got free that he could hardly think, and his new skin was so soft and tender that he felt limp and

queer. He found that he had wings of a pretty green, the same color as his legs. He knew these wings must have been growing under his old skin, and he stretched them slowly out to see how big they were. This was in the morning, and after he had stretched his wings he went to sleep for a long time.

When he awakened, the sun was in the western sky, and he tried to think who he was. He looked at himself, and instead of being green he was a dull brown and black. Then he saw his old skin clinging to the branch and staring him in the face. It was just the same shape as when he was in it, and he thought for a minute that he was dreaming. He rubbed his head hard with his front legs to make sure he was awake, and then he began to wonder which one he was. Sometimes he thought that the old skin which clung to the bush was the Cicada that had lain so long in the ground, and sometimes he thought that

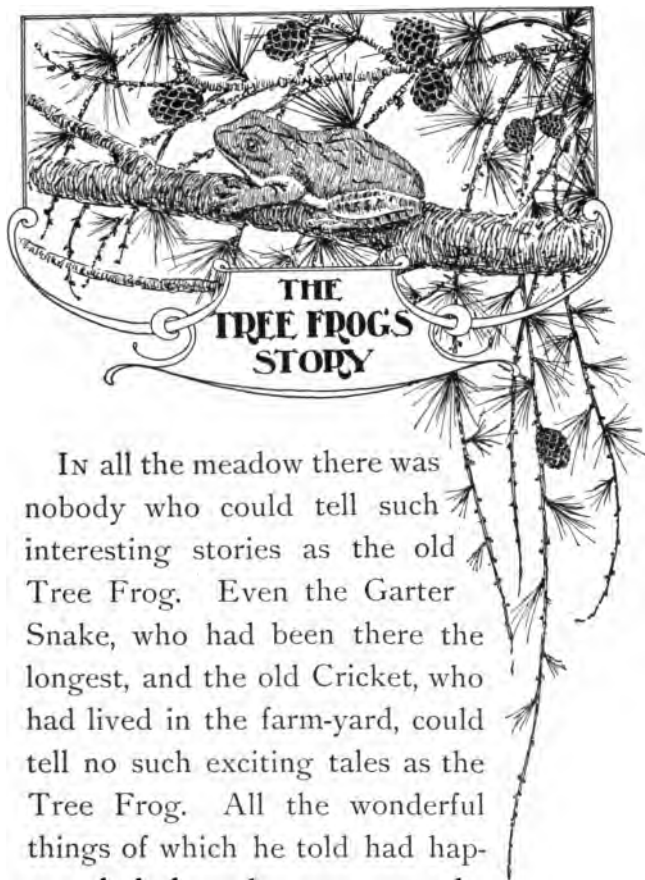
the soft, fat, new-looking one was the Cicada. Or were both of them the Cicada? If he were only one of the two, what would he do with the other?

While he was wondering about this in a sleepy way, an old Cicada from across the river flew down beside him. He thought he would ask her, so he waved his feelers as politely as he knew how, and said, "Excuse me, Madam Cicada, for I am much puzzled. It took me seventeen years to grow into a strong, crawling Cicada, and then in one day I separated. The thinking, moving part of me is here, but the outside shell of me is there on that branch. Now, which part is the real Cicada?"

"Why, that is easy enough," said the Madam Cicada; "You are *you*, of course. The part that you cast off and left clinging to the branch was very useful once. It kept you warm on cold days and cool on warm days, and you needed it while

you were only a crawling creature. But when your wings were ready to carry you off to a higher and happier life, then the skin that had been a help was in your way, and you did right to wriggle out of it. It is no longer useful to you. Leave it where it is and fly off to enjoy your new life. You will never have trouble if you remember that the thinking part is the real *you*."

And then Madam Cicada and her new friend flew away to her home over the river, and he saw many strange sights before he returned to the meadow.



IN all the meadow there was nobody who could tell such interesting stories as the old Tree Frog. Even the Garter Snake, who had been there the longest, and the old Cricket, who had lived in the farm-yard, could tell no such exciting tales as the Tree Frog. All the wonderful things of which he told had happened before he came to the meadow, and while he was still a young Frog. None of his friends had known him then, but he was an honest fellow,

and they were sure that everything he told was true : besides, they must be true, for how could a body ever think out such remarkable tales from his own head ?

When he first came to his home by the elm tree he was very thin, and looked as though he had been sick. The Katydid who stayed near said that he croaked in his sleep, and that, you know, is not what well and happy Frogs should do.

One day when many of the meadow people were gathered around him, he told them his story. "When I was a little fellow," he said, "I was strong and well, and could leap farther than any other Frog of my size. I was hatched in the pond beyond the farm-house, and ate my way from the egg to the water outside like any other Frog. Perhaps I ought to say, 'like any other Tadpole,' for, of course, I began life as a Tadpole. I played and ate with my brothers and sisters, and little dreamed what trouble was in store for me

when I grew up. We were all in a hurry to be Frogs, and often talked of what we would do and how far we would travel when we were grown.

"Oh, how happy we were then! I remember the day when my hind legs began to grow, and how the other Tadpoles crowded around me in the water and swam close to me to feel the two little bunches that were to be legs. My fore legs did not grow until later, and these bunches came just in front of my tail."

"Your tail!" cried a puzzled young Cricket; "why, you have n't any tail!"

"I did have when I was a Tadpole," said the Tree Frog. "I had a beautiful, wiggly little tail with which to swim through the waters of the pond; but as my legs grew larger and stronger, my tail grew littler and weaker, until there was n't any tail left. By the time my tail was gone I had four good legs, and could breathe through both my nose and my

skin. The knobs on the ends of my toes were sticky, so that I could climb a tree, and then I was ready to start on my travels. Some of the other Frogs started with me, but they stopped along the way, and at last I was alone.

“I was a bold young fellow, and when I saw a great white thing among the trees up yonder, I made up my mind to see what it was. There was a great red thing in the yard beside it, but I liked the white one better. I hopped along as fast as I could, for I did not then know enough to be afraid. I got close up to them both, and saw strange, big creatures going in and out of the red thing—the barn, as I afterward found it was called. The largest creatures had four legs, and some of them had horns. The smaller creatures had only two legs on which to walk, and two other limbs of some sort with which they lifted and carried things. The queerest thing about it was, that the smaller creat-

ures seemed to make the larger ones do whatever they wanted them to. They even made some of them help do their work. You may not believe me, but what I tell you is true. I saw two of the larger ones tied to a great load of dried grass and pulling it into the barn.

“As you may guess, I stayed there a long time, watching these strange creatures work. Then I went over toward the white thing, and that, I found out, was the farm-house. Here were more of the two-legged creatures, but they were dressed differently from those in the barn. There were some bright-colored flowers near the house, and I crawled in among them. There I rested until sunset, and then began my evening song. While I was singing, one of the people from the house came out and found me. She picked me up and carried me inside. Oh, how frightened I was! My heart thumped as though it would burst, and I tried my

best to get away from her. She did n't hurt me at all, but she would not let me go.

"She put me in a very queer prison. At first, when she put me down on a stone in some water, I did not know that I was in prison. I tried to hop away, and—bump! went my head against something. Yet when I drew back, I could see no wall there. I tried it again and again, and every time I hurt my head. I tell you the truth, my friends, those walls were made of something which one could see through."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed all the meadow people; "wonderful, indeed!"

"And at the top," continued the Tree Frog, "was something white over the doorway into my prison. In the bottom were water and a stone, and from the bottom to the top was a ladder. There I had to live for most of the summer. I had enough to eat; but anybody who has

been free cannot be happy shut in. I watched my chance, and three times I got out when the little door was not quite closed. Twice I was caught and put back. In the pleasant weather, of course, I went to the top of the ladder, and when it was going to rain I would go down again. Every time that I went up or down, those dreadful creatures would put their faces up close to my prison, and I could hear a roaring sound which meant they were talking and laughing.

"The last time I got out, I hid near the door of the house, and although they hunted and hunted for me, they did n't find me. After they stopped hunting, the wind blew the door open, and I hopped out."

"You don't say!" exclaimed a Grasshopper.

"Yes, I hopped out and scrambled away through the grass as fast as ever I could. You people who have never been

in prison cannot think how happy I was. It seemed to me that just stretching my legs was enough to make me wild with joy. Well, I came right here, and you were all kind to me, but for a long time I could not sleep without dreaming that I was back in prison, and I would croak in my sleep at the thought of it."

"I heard you," cried the Katydid, "and I wondered what was the matter."

"Matter enough," said the Tree Frog. "It makes my skin dry to think of it now. And, friends, the best way I can ever repay your kindness to me, is to tell you to never, never, never, never go near the farm-house."

And they all answered, "We never will."



**The GRASS-
HOPPER and
the MEASUR-
ING WORM
RUN a RACE**

A FEW days after the Measuring Worm came to the meadow he met the Grass-hoppers. Everybody had heard of the Caterpillars' wish to be fashionable, and some of the young Grass-hoppers, who did not know that it was all a joke, said they would like to teach the Measuring Worm a few things. So when they met him the young Grasshoppers began to make fun of him, and asked him what he did if he wanted to run, and whether he did n't wish his head grew on

the middle of his back so that he could see better when walking.

The Measuring Worm was good-natured, and only said that he found his head useful where it was. Soon one fine-looking Grasshopper asked him to race. "That will show," said the Grasshopper, "which is the better traveller."

The Measuring Worm said: "Certainly, I will race with you to-morrow, and we will ask all our friends to look on." Then he began talking about something else. He was a wise young fellow, as well as a jolly one, and he knew the Grasshoppers felt sure that he would be beaten. "If I cannot win the race by swift running," thought he, "I must try to win it by good planning." So he got the Grasshoppers to go with him to a place where the sweet young grass grew, and they all fed together.

The Measuring Worm nibbled only a little here and there, but he talked a great

deal about the sweetness of the grass, and how they would not get any more for a long time because the hot weather would spoil it. And the Grasshoppers said to each other: "He is right, and we must eat all we can while we have it." So they ate, and ate, and ate, and ate, until sunset, and in the morning they awakened and began eating again. When the time for the race came, they were all heavy and stupid from so much eating,—which was exactly what the Measuring Worm wanted.

The Tree Frog, the fat, old Cricket, and a Caterpillar were chosen to be the judges, and the race was to be a long one,—from the edge of the woods to the fence. When the meadow people were all gathered around to see the race, the Cricket gave a shrill chirp, which meant "Go!" and off they started. That is to say, the Measuring Worm started. The Grasshopper felt so sure he could beat

that he wanted to give the Measuring Worm a little the start, because then, you see, he could say he had won without half trying.

The Measuring Worm started off at a good, steady rate, and when he had gone a few feet the Grasshopper gave a couple of great leaps, which landed him far ahead of the Worm. Then he stopped to nibble a blade of grass and visit with some Katy-dids who were looking on. By and by he took a few more leaps and passed the Measuring Worm again. This time he began to show off by jumping up straight into the air, and when he came down he would call out to those who stood near to see how strong he was and how easy it would be for him to win the race. And everybody said, "How strong he is, to be sure!" "What wonderful legs he has!" and "He could beat the Measuring Worm with his eyes shut!" which made the Grasshopper so exceedingly vain that he stopped

more and more often to show his strength and daring.

That was the way it went, until they were only a short distance from the end of the race course. The Grasshopper was more and more pleased to think how easily he was winning, and stopped for a last time to nibble grass and make fun of the Worm. He gave a great leap into the air, and when he came down there was the Worm on the fence! All the meadow people croaked, and shrilled, and chirped to see the way in which the race ended, and the Grasshopper was very much vexed. "You should n't call him the winner," he said; "I can travel ten times as fast as he, if I try."

"Yes," answered the judges, "we all know that, yet the winning of the race is not decided by what you might do, but by what you did do." And the meadow people all cried: "Long live the Measuring Worm! Long live the Measuring Worm!"



MR GREEN FROG AND HIS VISITORS

ONE day a young Frog who lived down by the river, came hopping up through the meadow. He was a fine-looking fellow, all brown and green, with a white vest, and he came to see the sights. The oldest Frog on the river bank had told him that he

ought to travel and learn to know the world, so he had started at once.

Young Mr. Green Frog had very big eyes, and they stuck out from his head more than ever when he saw all the strange sights and heard all the strange sounds of the meadow. Yet he made one great mistake, just as bigger and better people sometimes do when they go on a journey; he did n't try to learn from the things he saw, but only to show off to the meadow people how much he already knew, and he boasted a great deal of the fine way in which he lived when at home.

Mr. Green Frog told those whom he met that the meadow was dreadfully dry, and that he really could not see how they lived there. He said they ought to see the lovely soft mud that there was in the marsh, and that there the people could sit all day with their feet in water in among the rushes where the sunshine never came. "And then," he said, "to eat grass as the

Grasshoppers did! If they would go home with him, he would show them how to live."

The older Grasshoppers and Crickets and Locusts only looked at each other and opened their funny mouths in a smile, but the young ones thought Mr. Green Frog must be right, and they wanted to go back with him. The old Hoppers told them that they would n't like it down there, and that they would be sorry that they had gone; still the young ones teased and teased and teased until everybody said: "Well, let them go, and then perhaps they will be contented when they return."

At last they all set off together,—Mr. Green Frog and the young meadow people. Mr. Green Frog took little jumps all the way and bragged and bragged. The Grasshoppers went in long leaps, the Crickets scampered most of the way, and the Locusts fluttered. It was a very gay

little party, and they kept saying to each other, "What a fine time we shall have!"

When they got to the marsh, Mr. Green Frog went in first with a soft "plunk" in the mud. The rest all followed and tried to make believe that they liked it, but they did n't—they did n't at all. The Grasshoppers kept bumping against the tough, hard rushes when they jumped, and then that would tumble them over on their backs in the mud, and there they would lie, kicking their legs in the air, until some friendly Cricket pushed them over on their feet again. The Locusts could n't fly at all there, and the Crickets got their shiny black coats all grimy and horrid.

They all got cold and wet and tired—yes, and hungry too, for there were no tender green things growing in among the rushes. Still they pretended to have a good time, even while they were think-

ing how they would like to be in their dear old home.

After the sun went down in the west it grew colder still, and all the Frogs in the marsh began to croak to the moon, croaking so loudly that the tired little travellers could not sleep at all. When the Frogs stopped croaking and went to sleep in the mud, one tired Cricket said: "If you like this, *stay*. I am going home as fast as my six little legs will carry me." And all the rest of the travellers said: "So am I," "So am I," "So am I."

Mr. Green Frog was sleeping soundly, and they crept away as quietly as they could out into the silvery moonlight and up the bank towards home. Such a tired little party as they were, and so hungry that they had to stop and eat every little while. The dew was on the grass and they could not get warm.

The sun was just rising behind the eastern forest when they got home. They

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did not want to tell about their trip at all, but just ate a lot of pepper-grass to make them warm, and then rolled themselves in between the woolly mullein leaves to rest all day long. And that was the last time any of them ever went away with a stranger.



EVERYTHING in the meadow was dry and dusty. The leaves on the milkweeds were turning yellow with thirst, the field blossoms drooped their dainty heads in the sunshine, and the grass seemed to fairly rattle in the wind, it was so brown and dry.

All of the meadow people when they met each other would say, "Well, this *is* hot," and the Garter Snake, who had lived there longer than anyone else,

declared that it was the hottest and driest time that he had ever known. "Really," he said, "it is so hot that I cannot eat, and such a thing never happened before."

The Grasshoppers and Locusts were very happy, for such weather was exactly what they liked. They did n't see how people could complain of such delightful scorching days. But that, you know, is always the way, for everybody cannot be suited at once, and all kinds of weather are needed to make a good year.

The poor Tree Frog crawled into the coolest place he could find—hollow trees, shady nooks under the ferns, or even beneath the corner of a great stone. "Oh," said he, "I wish I were a Tadpole again, swimming in a shady pool. It is such a long, hot journey to the marsh that I cannot go. Last night I dreamed that I was a Tadpole, splashing in the water, and it was hard to awaken and find myself only an uncomfortable old Tree Frog."

Over his head the Katydid's were singing, "Lovely weather! Lovely weather!" and the Tree Frog, who was a good-natured old fellow after all, winked his eye at them and said: "Sing away. This won't last always, and then it will be my turn to sing."

Sure enough, the very next day a tiny cloud drifted across the sky, and the Tree Frog, who always knew when the weather was about to change, began his rain-song. "Pukr-r-rup!" sang he, "Pukr-r-rup! It will rain! It will rain! R-r-r-rain!"

The little white cloud grew bigger and blacker, and another came following after, then another, and another, and another, until the sky was quite covered with rushing black clouds. Then came a long, low rumble of thunder, and all the meadow people hurried to find shelter. The Moths and Butterflies hung on the under sides of great leaves. The Grasshoppers and their cousins crawled under burdock and mullein plants. The Ants scurried around to find their

own homes. The Bees and Wasps, who had been gathering honey for their nests, flew swiftly back. Everyone was hurrying to be ready for the shower, and above all the rustle and stir could be heard the voice of the old Frog, "Pukr-r-rup! Pukr-r-rup! It will rain! It will rain! R-r-r-rain!"

The wind blew harder and harder, the branches swayed and tossed, the leaves danced, and some even blew off of their mother trees; the hundreds of little clinging creatures clung more and more tightly to the leaves that sheltered them, and then the rain came, and such a rain! Great drops hurrying down from the sky, crowding each other, beating down the grass, flooding the homes of the Ants and Digger Wasps until they were half choked with water, knocking over the Grasshoppers and tumbling them about like leaves. The lightning flashed, and the thunder pealed, and often a tree would crash down in the forest near by when the wind blew a great blast.

When everybody was wet, and little rivulets of water were trickling through the grass and running into great puddles in the hollows, the rain stopped, stopped suddenly. One by one the meadow people crawled or swam into sight.

The Digger Wasp was floating on a leaf in a big puddle. He was too tired and wet to fly, and the whirling of the leaf made him feel sick and dizzy, but he stood firmly on his tiny boat and tried to look as though he enjoyed it.

The Ants were rushing around to put their homes in shape, the Spiders were busily eating their old webs, which had been broken and torn in the storm, and some were already beginning new ones. A large family of Bees, whose tree-home had been blown down, passed over the meadow in search for a new dwelling, and everybody seemed busy and happy in the cool air that followed the storm.

The Snake went gliding through the

wet grass, as hungry as ever, the Tree Frog was as happy as when he was a Tadpole, and only the Grasshoppers and their cousins, the Locusts and Katydid, were cross. "Such a horrid rain!" they grumbled, "it spoiled all our fun. And after such lovely hot weather too."

"Now don't be silly," said the Tree Frog, who could be really severe when he thought best, "the Bees and the Ants are not complaining, and they had a good deal harder time than you. Can't you make the best of anything? A nice, hungry, cross lot you would be if it did n't rain, because then you would have no good, juicy food. It's better for you in the end as it is, but even if it were not, you might make the best of it as I did of the hot weather. When you have lived as long as I have, you will know that neither Grasshoppers nor Tree Frogs can have their way all the time, but that it always comes out all right in the end without their fretting about it."



THIS is the story of a venturesome young Spider, who left his home in the meadow to seek his fortune in the great world.

He was a beautiful Spider, and belonged to one of the best families in the country around. He was a worker, too, for, as he had often said, there was n't a lazy leg on his body, and he could spin the biggest, strongest, and shiniest web in the meadow. All the



young people in the meadow liked him, and he was invited to every party, or

dance, or picnic that they planned. If he had been content to stay at home, as his brothers and sisters were, he would in time have become as important and well known as the Tree Frog, or the fat, old Cricket, or even as the Garter Snake.

But that would not satisfy him at all, and one morning he said "Good-by" to all his friends and relatives, and set sail for unknown lands. He set sail, but not on water. He crawled up a tree, and out to the end of one of its branches. There he began spinning a long silken rope, and letting the wind blow it away from the tree. He held fast to one end, and when the wind was quite strong, he let go of the branch and sailed off through the air, carried by his rope balloon, and blown along by the wind.

The meadow people, on the ground below, watched him until he got so far away that he looked about as large as a Fly, and then he looked no bigger than an Ant,

and then no bigger than a clover seed, and then no bigger than the tiniest egg that was ever laid, and then—well, then you could see nothing but sky, and the Spider was truly gone. The other young Spiders all wished that they had gone, and the old Spiders said, “They might much better stay at home, as their fathers and mothers had done.” There was no use talking about it when they disagreed so, and very little more was said.

Meanwhile, the young traveller was having a very fine time. He was carried past trees and over fences, down toward the river. Under him were all the bright flowers of the meadow, and the bushes which used to tower above his head. After a while, he saw the rushes of the marsh below him, and wondered if the Frogs there would see him as he passed over them.

Next, he saw a beautiful, shining river, and in the quiet water by the shore were

great white water-lilies growing, with their green leaves, or pads, floating beside them. "Ah," thought he, "I shall pass over the river, and land on the farther side," and he began to think of eating his rope balloon, so that he might sink slowly to the ground, when—the wind suddenly stopped blowing, and he began falling slowly down, down, down, down.

How he longed for a branch to cling to! How he shivered at the thought of plunging into the cold water! How he wished that he had always stayed at home! How he thought of all the naughty things that he had ever done, and was sorry that he had done them! But it was of no use, for still he went down, down, down. He gave up all hope and tried to be brave, and at that very minute he felt himself alight on a great green lily-pad.

This was indeed an adventure, and he was very joyful for a little while. But he got hungry, and there was no food near.

He walked all over the leaf, Lily-Pad Island he named it, and ran around its edges as many as forty times. It was just a flat, green island, and at one side was a perfect white lily, which had grown, so pure and beautiful, out of the darkness and slime of the river bottom. The lily was so near that he jumped over to it. There he nestled in its sweet, yellow centre, and went to sleep.

When he fell asleep it was late in the afternoon, and, as the sun sank lower and lower in the west, the lily began to close her petals and get ready for the night. She was just drawing under the water when the Spider awakened. It was dark and close, and he felt himself shut in and going down. He scrambled and pushed, and got out just in time to give a great leap and alight on Lily Pad-Island once more. And then he was in a sad plight. He was hungry and cold, and night was coming on, and, what was worst of all, in

his great struggle to free himself from the lily he had pulled off two of his legs, so he had only six left.

He never liked to think of that night afterward, it was so dreadful. In the morning he saw a leaf come floating down the stream; he watched it; it touched Lily-Pad Island for just an instant and he jumped on. He did not know where it would take him, but anything was better than staying where he was and starving. It might float to the shore, or against one of the rushes that grew in the shallower parts of the river. If it did that, he would jump off and run up to the top and set sail again, but the island, where he had been, was too low to give him a start.

He went straight down-stream for a while, then the leaf drifted into a little eddy, and whirled around and around, until the Spider was almost too dizzy to stand on it. After that, it floated slowly, very slowly, toward the shore, and at last

came the joyful minute when the Spider could jump to some of the plants that grew in the shallow water, and, by making rope bridges from one to another, get on solid ground.

After a few days' rest he started back to the meadow, asking his way of every insect that he met. When he got home they did not know him, he was so changed, but thought him only a tramp Spider, and not one of their own people. His mother was the first one to find out who he was, and when her friends said, "Just what I expected! He might have known better," she hushed them, and answered: "The poor child has had a hard time, and I won't scold him for going. He has learned that home is the best place, and that home friends are the dearest. I shall keep him quiet while his new legs are growing, and then, I think, he will spin his webs near the old place."

And so he did, and is now one of the

steadiest of all the meadow people. When anybody asks him his age, he refuses to tell, "For," he says, "most of me is middle-aged, but these two new legs of mine are still very young."



EARLY one wet morning, a long Earthworm came out of his burrow. He did not really leave it, but he dragged most of his body out, and let just the tip-end of it stay in the earth. Not having any eyes, he could not see the heavy, gray clouds that filled the sky, nor the milk-weed stalks, so heavy with rain-drops that they drooped their pink heads. He could not see these things, but he could feel the soft, damp grass, and the cool, clear air, and as for seeing, why, Earthworms never do have eyes, and never think of wanting them, any more than you would want six legs, or feelers on your head.

This Earthworm had been out of his burrow only a little while, when there was a flutter and a rush, and Something flew down from the sky and bit his poor body in two. Oh, how it hurt! Both halves of him wriggled and twisted with pain, and there is no telling what might have become of them if another and bigger Something had not come rushing down to drive the first Something away. So there the poor Earthworm lay, in two aching, wriggling pieces, and although it had been easy enough to bite him in two, nothing in the world could ever bite him into one.

After a while the aching stopped, and he had time to think. It was very hard to decide what he ought to do. You can see just how puzzling it must have been, for, if you should suddenly find yourself two people instead of one, you would not know which one was which. At this very minute, who should come along but the

Cicada, and one of the Earthworm pieces asked his advice. The Cicada thought that he was the very person to advise in such a case, because he had had such a puzzling time himself. So he said in a very knowing way: "Pooh! That is a simple matter. I thought I was two Cicadas once, but I was n't. The thinking, moving part is the real one, whatever happens, so that part of the Worm which thinks and moves is the real Worm."

"I am the thinking part," cried each of the pieces.

The Cicada rubbed his head with his front legs, he was so surprised.

"And I am the moving part," cried each of the pieces, giving a little wriggle to prove it.

"Well, well, well, well!" exclaimed the Cicada, "I believe I don't know how to settle this. I will call the Garter Snake," and he flew off to get him.

A very queer couple they made, the

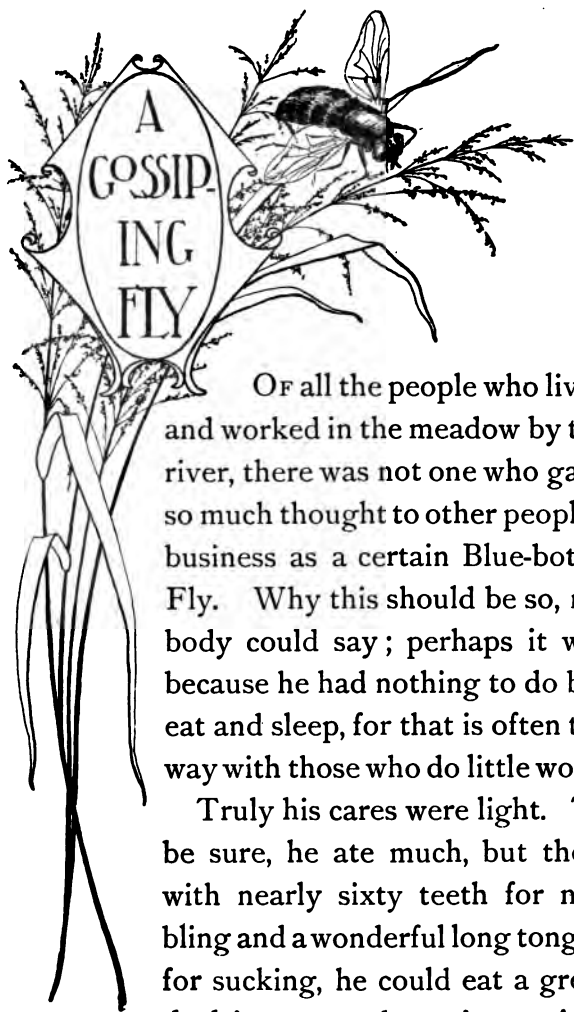
Garter Snake and the Cicada, as they came hurrying back from the Snake's home. The Garter Snake was quite excited. "Such a thing has not happened in our meadow for a long time," he said, "and it is a good thing there is somebody here to explain it to you, or you would be dreadfully frightened. My family is related to the Worms, and I know. Both of you pieces are Worms now. The bitten ends will soon be well, and you can keep house side by side, if you don't want to live together."

"Well," said the Earthworms, "if we are no longer the same Worm, but two Worms, are we related to each other? Are we brothers, or what?"

"Why," answered the Garter Snake, with a funny little smile, "I think you might call yourselves half-brothers." And to this day they are known as "the Earthworm half-brothers." They are very fond of each other and are always seen together.

A jolly young Grasshopper, who is a great eater and thinks rather too much about food, said he would n't mind being bitten into two Grasshoppers, if it would give him two stomachs and let him eat twice as much.

The Cicada told the Garter Snake this one day, and the Garter Snake said : "Tell him not to try it. The Earthworms are the only meadow people who can live after being bitten in two that way. The rest of us have to be one, or nothing. And as for having two stomachs, he is just as well off with one, for if he had two, he would get twice as hungry."



OF all the people who lived and worked in the meadow by the river, there was not one who gave so much thought to other people's business as a certain Blue-bottle Fly. Why this should be so, nobody could say ; perhaps it was because he had nothing to do but eat and sleep, for that is often the way with those who do little work.

Truly his cares were light. To be sure, he ate much, but then, with nearly sixty teeth for nibbling and a wonderful long tongue for sucking, he could eat a great deal in a very short time. And

as for sleeping—well, sleeping was as easy for him as for anyone else.

However it was, he saw nearly everything that happened, and thought it over in his queer little three-cornered head until he was sure that he ought to go to talk about it with somebody else. It was no wonder that he saw so much, for he had a great bunch of eyes on each side of his head, and three bright, shining ones on the very top of it. That let him see almost everything at once, and beside this his neck was so exceedingly slender that he could turn his head very far around.

This particular Fly, like all other Flies, was very fond of the sunshine and kept closely at home in dark or wet weather. He had no house, but stayed in a certain elder bush on cloudy days and called that his home. He had spent all of one stormy day there, hanging on the under side of a leaf, with nothing to do but think. Of course, his head was down and his feet

were up, but Blue-bottle Flies think in that position as well as in any other, and the two sticky pads on each side of his six feet held him there very comfortably.

He thought so much that day, that when the next morning dawned sunshiny and clear, he had any number of things to tell people, and he started out at once.

First he went to the Tree Frog. "What do you suppose," said he, "that the Garter Snake is saying about you? It is very absurd, yet I feel that you ought to know. He says that your tongue is fastened at the wrong end, and that the tip of it points down your throat. Of course, I knew it could n't be true, still I thought I would tell you what he said, and then you could see him and put a stop to it."

For an answer to this the Tree Frog ran out his tongue, and, sure enough, it was fastened at the front end. "The Snake is quite right," he said pleasantly, "and my tongue suits me perfectly. It is

just what I need for the kind of food I eat, and the best of all is that it never makes mischief between friends."

After that, the Fly could say nothing more there, so he flew away in his noisiest manner to find the Grasshopper who lost the race. "It was a shame," said the Fly to him, "that the judges did not give the race to you. The idea of that little green Measuring Worm coming in here, almost a stranger, and making so much trouble! I would have him driven out of the meadow, if I were you."

"Oh, that is all right," answered the Grasshopper, who was really a good fellow at heart; "I was very foolish about that race for a time, but the Measuring Worm and I are firm friends now. Are we not?" And he turned to a leaf just back of him, and there, peeping around the edge, was the Measuring Worm himself.

The Blue-bottle Fly left in a hurry, for where people were so good-natured he

could do nothing at all. He went this time to the Crickets, whom he found all together by the fat, old Cricket's hole.

"I came," he said, "to find out if it were true, as the meadow people say, that you were all dreadfully frightened when the Cow came?"

The Crickets answered never a word, but they looked at each other and began asking him questions.

"Is it true," said one, "that you do nothing but eat and sleep?"

"Is it true," said another, "that your eyes are used most of the time for seeing other people's faults?"

"And is it true," said another, "that with all the fuss you make, you do little but mischief?"

The Blue-bottle Fly answered nothing, but started at once for his home in the elder bush, and they say that his three-cornered head was filled with very different thoughts from any that had been there before.



IN this meadow, as in every other meadow since the world began, there were some people who were always tired of the way things were, and thought that, if the world were only different, they would be perfectly happy. One of these discontented ones was a certain Mosquito, a fellow with a whining voice and disagreeable manners. He had very little patience with people who were not like him, and thought that



the world would be a much pleasanter place if all the insects had been made Mosquitoes.

“What is the use of Spiders, and Dragon-flies, and Beetles, and Butterflies?” he would say, fretfully; “a Mosquito is worth more than any of them.”

You can just see how unreasonable he was. Of course, Mosquitoes and Flies do help keep the air pure and sweet, but that is no reason why they should set themselves up above the other insects. Do not the Bees carry pollen from one flower to another, and so help the plants raise their Seed Babies? And who would not miss the bright, happy Butterflies, with their work of making the world beautiful?

But this Mosquito never thought of those things, and he said to himself: “Well, if they cannot all be Mosquitoes, they can at least try to live like them, and I think I will call them together and talk it over.” So he sent word all around, and

his friends and neighbors gathered to hear what he had to say.

"In the first place," he remarked, "it is unfortunate that you are not Mosquitoes, but, since you are not, one must make the best of it. There are some things, however, which you might learn from us fortunate creatures who are. For instance, notice the excellent habit of the Mosquitoes in the matter of laying eggs. Three or four hundred of the eggs are fastened together and left floating on a pond in such a way that, when the babies break their shells, they go head first into the water. Then they ——"

"Do you think I would do that if I could?" interrupted a motherly old Grasshopper. "Fix it so my children would drown the minute they came out of the egg? No, indeed!" and she hurried angrily away, followed by several other loving mothers.

"But they don't drown," exclaimed the Mosquito, in surprise.

“They don’t if they ’re Mosquitoes,” replied the Ant, “but I am thankful to say my children are land babies and not water babies.”

“Well, I won’t say anything more about that, but I must speak of your voices, which are certainly too heavy and loud to be pleasant. I should think you might speak and sing more softly, even if you have no pockets under your wings like mine. I flutter my wings, and the air strikes these pockets and makes my sweet voice.”

“Humph!” exclaimed a Bee, “it is a very poor place for pockets, and a very poor use to make of them. Every Bee knows that pockets are handiest on the hind legs, and should be used for carrying pollen to the babies at home.”

“My pocket is behind,” said a Spider, “and my web silk is kept there. I could n’t live without a pocket.”

Some of the meadow people were get-

ting angry, so the Garter Snake, who would always rather laugh than quarrel, glided forward and said: "My friends and neighbors; our speaker here has been so kind as to tell us how the Mosquitoes do a great many things, and to try to teach us their way. It seems to me that we might repay some of his kindness by showing him our ways, and seeing that he learns by practice. I would ask the Spiders to take him with them and show him how to spin a web. Then the Bees could teach him how to build comb, and the Tree Frog how to croak, and the Earthworms how to burrow, and the Caterpillars how to spin a cocoon. Each of us will do something for him. Perhaps the Measuring Worm will teach him to walk as the Worms of his family do. I understand he does that very well." Here everybody laughed, remembering the joke played on the Caterpillars, and the Snake stopped speaking.

110 Among the Meadow People.

The Mosquito did not dare refuse to be taught, and so he was taken from one place to another, and told exactly how to do everything that he could not possibly do, until he felt so very meek and humble that he was willing the meadow people should be busy and happy in their own way.



By the edge of the marsh lived a young Frog, who thought a great deal about herself and much less about other people. Not that it was wrong to think so much of herself, but it certainly was unfortunate that she should have so little time left in which to think of others and of the beautiful world.

Early in the morning this Frog would awaken and lean far over the edge of a pool to see how

she looked after her night's rest. Then she would give a spring, and come down with a splash in the cool water for her morning bath. For a while she would swim as fast as her dainty webbed feet would push her, then she would rest, sitting in the soft mud with just her head above the water.

When her bath was taken, she had her breakfast, and that was the way in which she began her day. She did nothing but bathe and eat and rest, from sunrise to sunset. She had a fine, strong body, and had never an ache or a pain, but one day she got to thinking, "What if sometime I should be sick?" And then, because she thought about nothing but her own self, she was soon saying, "I am afraid I shall be sick." In a little while longer it was, "I certainly am sick."

She crawled under a big toadstool, and sat there looking very glum indeed, until a Cicada came along. She told the Cicada

The Frog who Thought herself Sick. 113

how sick she felt, and he told his cousins, the Locusts, and they told their cousins, the Grasshoppers, and they told their cousins, the Katydids, and then everybody told somebody else, and started for the toadstool where the young Frog sat. The more she had thought of it, the worse she felt, until, by the time the meadow people came crowding around, she was feeling very sick indeed.

“Where do you feel badly?” they cried, and, “How long have you been sick?” and one Cricket stared with big eyes, and said, “How dr-r-readfully she looks!” The young Frog felt weaker and weaker, and answered in a faint little voice that she had felt perfectly well until after breakfast, but that now she was quite sure her skin was getting dry, and “Oh dear!” and “Oh dear!”

Now everybody knows that Frogs breathe through their skins as well as through their noses, and for a Frog's skin

to get dry is very serious, for then he cannot breathe through it ; so, as soon as she said that, everybody was frightened and wanted to do something for her at once. Some of the timid ones began to weep, and the others bustled around, getting in each other's way and all trying to do something different. One wanted to wrap her in mullein leaves, another wanted her to nibble a bit of the peppermint which grew near, a third thought she should be kept moving, and that was the way it went.

Just when everybody was at his wits' end, the old Tree Frog came along. "Pukr-r-rup ! What is the matter with you ?" he said.

"Oh !" gasped the young Frog, weakly, "I am sure my skin is getting dry, and I feel as though I had something in my head."

"Umph !" grunted the Tree Frog to himself, "I guess there is n't enough in her head to ever make her sick ; and, as

for her skin, it is n't dry yet, and nobody knows that it ever will be."

But as he was a wise old fellow and had learned much about life, he knew he must not say such things aloud. What he did say was, "I heard there was to be a great race in the pool this morning."

The young Frog lifted her head quite quickly, saying: "You did? Who are the racers?"

"Why, all the young Frogs who live around here. It is too bad that you cannot go."

"I don't believe it would hurt me any," she said.

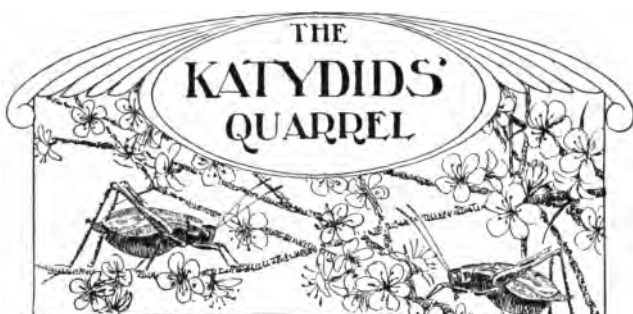
"You might take cold," the Tree Frog said; "besides, the exercise would tire you."

"Oh, but I am feeling much better," the young Frog said, "and I am certain it will do me good."

"You ought not to go," insisted all the older meadow people. "You really ought not."

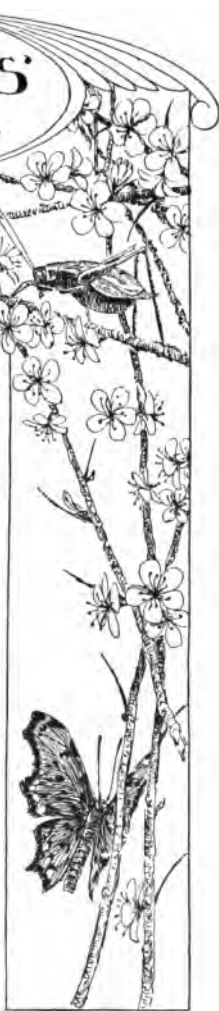
"I don't care," she answered, "I am going anyway, and I am just as well as anybody."

And she did go, and it did seem that she was as strong as ever. The people all wondered at it, but the Tree Frog winked his eyes at them and said, "I knew that it would cure her." And then he, and the Garter Snake, and the fat, old Cricket laughed together, and all the younger meadow people wondered at what they were laughing.



THE warm summer days were past, and the Katydid's came again to the meadow. Everybody was glad to see them, and the Grasshoppers, who are cousins of the Katydid's, gave a party in their honor.

Such a time as the meadow people had getting ready for that party! They did not have to change their dresses, but they scraped and cleaned themselves, and all the young Grasshoppers went off by



the woods to practise jumping and get their knees well limbered, because there might be games and dancing at the party, and then how dreadful it would be if any young Grasshopper should find that two or three of his legs would n't bend easily!

The Grasshoppers did not know at just what time they ought to have the party. Some of the meadow people whom they wanted to invite were used to sleeping all day, and some were used to sleeping all night, so it really was hard to find an hour at which all would be wide-awake and ready for fun. At last the Tree Frog said: "Pukr-r-rup! Pukr-r-rup! Have it at sunset!" And at sunset it was.

Everyone came on time, and they hopped and chattered and danced and ate a party supper of tender green leaves. Some of the little Grasshoppers grew sleepy and crawled among the plantains for a nap. Just then a big Katydid said he would sing a song—which was a very

kind thing for him to do, because he really did it to make the others happy, and not to show what a fine musician he was. All the guests said, "How charming!" or, "We should be delighted!" and he seated himself on a low swinging branch. You know Katydids sing with the covers of their wings, and so when he alighted on the branch he smoothed down his pale green suit and rubbed his wing-cases a little to make sure that they were in tune. Then he began loud and clear, "Katy did! Katy did!! Katy did!!!"

Of course he did n't mean any real Katy, but was just singing his song. However, there was another Katydid there who had a habit of contradicting, and he had eaten too much supper, and that made him feel crosser than ever; so when the singer said "Katy did!" this cross fellow jumped up and said, "Katy did n't! Katy did n't!! Katy did n't!!!" and they kept at it, one saying that she

did and the other that she did n't, until everybody was ashamed and uncomfortable, and some of the little Grasshoppers awakened and wanted to know what was the matter.

Both of the singers got more and more vexed until at last neither one knew just what he was saying—and that, you know, is what almost always happens when people grow angry. They just kept saying something as loud and fast as possible and thought all the while that they were very bright—which was all they knew about it.

Suddenly somebody noticed that the one who began to say "Katy did!" was screaming "Katy did n't!" and the one who had said "Katy did n't!" was roaring "Katy did!" Then they all laughed, and the two on the branch looked at each other in a very shamefaced way.

The Tree Frog always knew the right thing to do, and he said "Pukr-r-rup!"

so loudly that all stopped talking at once. When they were quiet he said: "We will now listen to a duet, 'Katy,' by the two singers who are up the tree. All please join in the chorus." So it was begun again, and both the leaders were good-natured, and all the Katydids below joined in with "did or did n't, did or did n't, did or did n't." And that was the end of the quarrel.



SUMMER had been a joyful time in the meadow. It had been a busy time, too, and from morning till night the chirping and humming of the happy people there had mingled with the rustle of the leaves, and the soft "swish, swish," of the tall grass, as the wind passed over it.

True, there had been a few quarrels, and some unpleasant things to remem-

ber, but these little people were wise enough to throw away all the sad memories and keep only the glad ones. And now the summer was over. The leaves of the forest trees were turning from green to scarlet, orange, and brown. The beech and hickory nuts were only waiting for a friendly frost to open their outer shells, and loosen their stems, so that they could fall to the earth.

The wind was cold now, and the meadow people knew that the time had come to get ready for winter. One chilly Caterpillar said to another, "Boo-oo! How cold it is! I must find a place for my cocoon. Suppose we sleep side by side this winter, swinging on the same bush?"

And his friend replied: "We must hurry then, or we shall be too old and stiff to spin good ones."

The Garter Snake felt sleepy all the time, and declared that in a few days he would doze off until spring.

The Tree Frog had chosen his winter home already, and the Bees were making the most of their time in visiting the last fall flowers, and gathering every bit of honey they could find for their cold-weather stock.

The last eggs had been laid, and the food had been placed beside many of them for the babies that would hatch out in the spring. Nothing was left but to say "Good-by," and fall asleep. So a message was sent around the meadow for all to come to a farewell party under the elm tree.

Everybody came, and all who could sing did so, and the Crickets and Mosquitoes made music for the rest to dance by.

The Tree Frog led off with a black and yellow Spider, the Garter Snake followed with a Potato Bug, and all the other crawling people joined in the dance on the grass, while over their heads the Butterflies and other light-winged ones fluttered to and fro with airy grace.

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The Snail and the fat, old Cricket had meant to look on, and really did so, for a time, from a warm corner by the tree, but the Cricket could n't stand it to not join in the fun. First, his eyes gleamed, his feelers waved, and his feet kept time to the music, and, when a frisky young Ant beckoned to him, he gave a great leap and danced with the rest, balancing, jumping, and circling around in a most surprising way.

When it grew dark, the Fireflies' lights shone like tiny stars, and the dancing went on until all were tired and ready to sing together the last song of the summer, for on the morrow they would go to rest. And this was their song :

The autumn leaves lying
So thick on the ground,
The summer Birds flying
The meadow around,
Say, " Good-by."

The Seed Babies dropping
Down out of our sight,
The Dragon-flies stopping
A moment in flight,
Say, "Good-by."

The red Squirrels bearing
Their nuts to the tree,
The wild Rabbits caring
For babies so wee,
Say, "Good-by."

The sunbeams now showing
Are hazy and pale,
The warm breezes blowing
Have changed to a gale,
So, "Good-by."

The season for working
Is passing away.
Both playing and shirking
Are ended to day,
So, "Good-by."

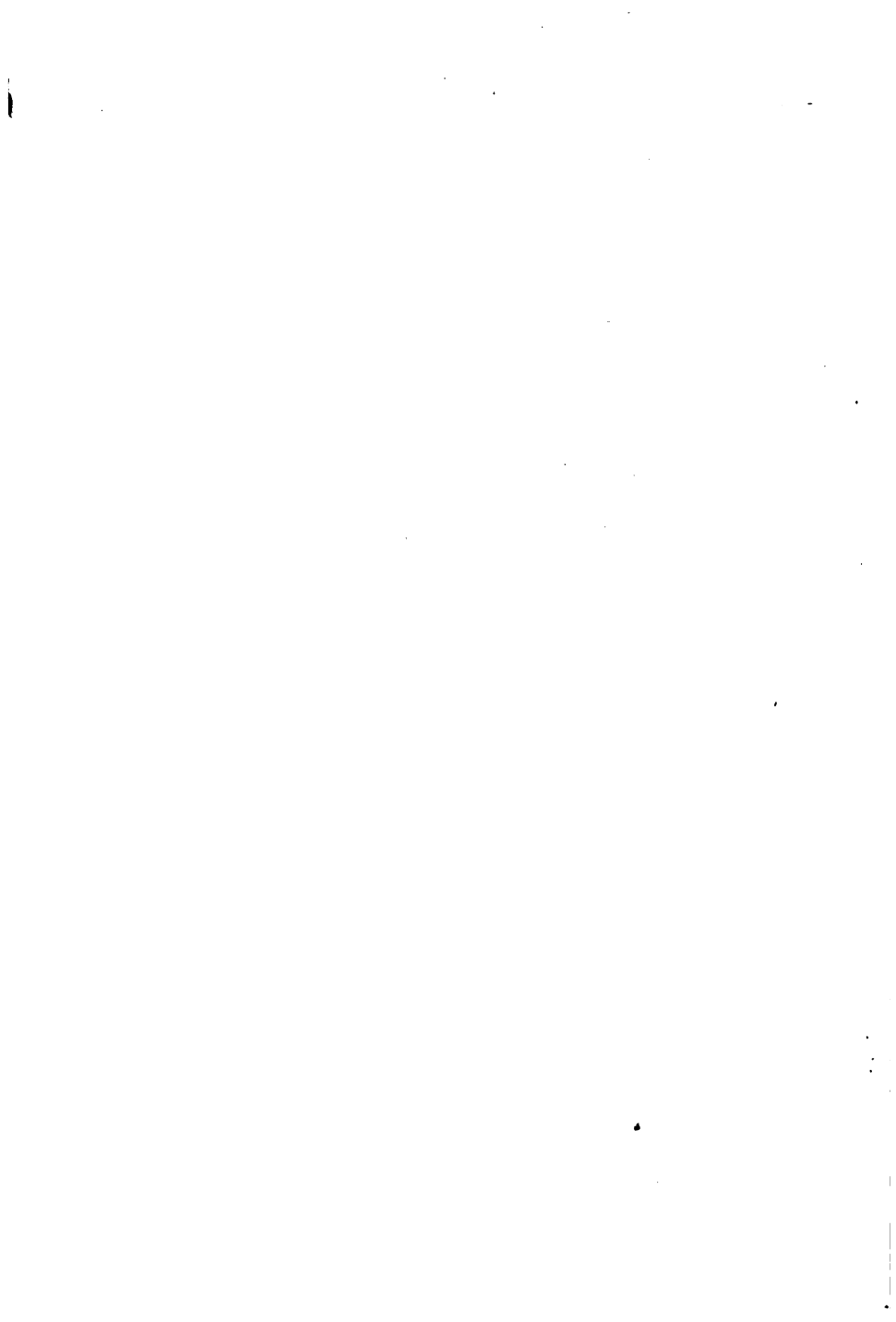
The Garter Snake creeping
So softly to rest,
The fuzzy Worms sleeping
Within their warm nest,
Say, "Good-by."

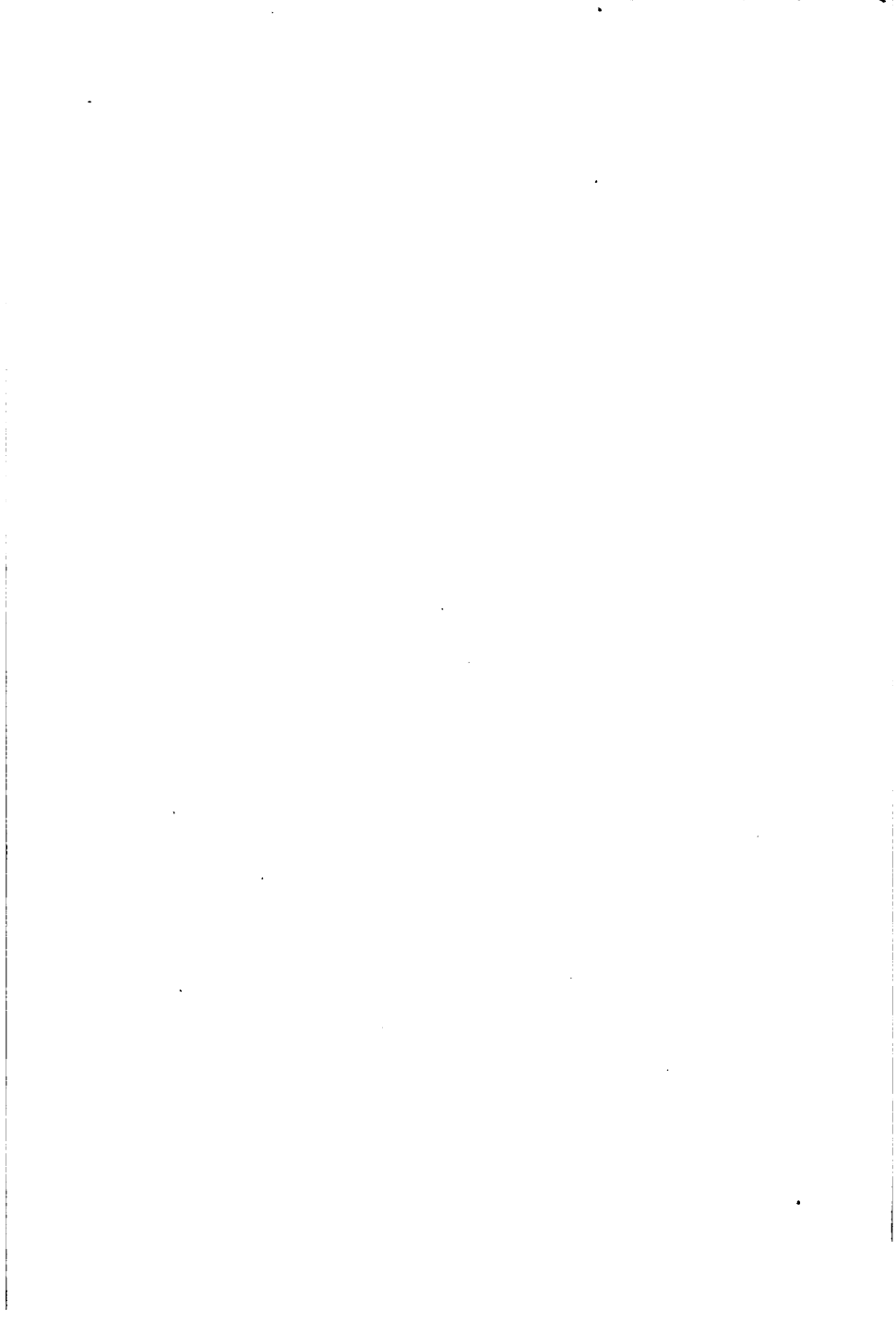
The Last Party of the Season. 127

The Honey Bees crawling
Around the full comb,
The tiny Ants calling
Each one to the home,
Say, "Good-by."

We 've ended our singing,
Our dancing, and play,
And Nature's voice ringing
Now tells us to say
Our "Good-by."

THE END.







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